

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Status

Claims 1-18 are allowed. Claims 19-21, 23-30, and 32-36 are pending in the application. Claims 22 and 31 have been canceled. Claims 1, 5-7, 10, 14-16, 23-25, 28, and 32-36 were previously amended.

Claims 19 and 28 are currently amended to clarify the claims. Claims 1, 3, 10, 12, 19, 21, 28 and 30 are currently amended to replace rubber with elastic-polymer. (Support for this amendment is found in the Specification on page 9, lines 17-18.) Claims 5, 14, 23 and 32 are currently amended to fix a typographical error where S_r and S_s were reversed. No new matter has been added.

Claim Objections

The objections to the claims have been addressed in the amendments of the claims. The claims have been renumbered and the typographical errors have been corrected.

\$102 Rejection

Independent claims 19, and 28 are rejected as anticipated by Ames (US 6,253,431). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Ames discloses in Figure 1 that the metal rollers 42, 62, and 72 lie above tow 14 and that the roller pairs 40, 60, and 70 are **horizontally disposed**. Also see Ames, column 4, lines 8-64.

Independent claims 19 and 28 have been clarified to recite that the "metal rollers [are] oppositely disposed about the tow." Accordingly, these claims distinguish Ames.

Therefore, claims 19-21, 23-30, and 32-36 are patentable over Ames.

\$103 Rejection

Claims 19-21, 23-30 and 32-36 are rejected as obvious over Ames in view of Self. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

As discussed above, Ames discloses in Figure 1 that the metal rollers 42, 62, and 72 lie above tow 14 and that the roller pairs 40, 60, and 70 are **horizontally disposed**. Also see Ames, column 4, lines 8-64.

Self makes no mention of **oppositely disposed** metal rollers or even metal rollers.

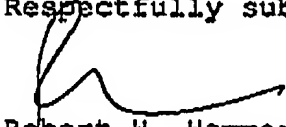
Independent claims 19 and 28 have been clarified to recite that the "metal rollers [are] oppositely disposed about the tow." Accordingly, these claims distinguish Ames in view of Self.

Therefore, claims 19-21, 23-30, and 32-36 are patentable over Ames in view of Self.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests an early Notice of Allowance in this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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